

Cooperative Education

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Career and Technical Education (CTE) Division
Arizona Department of Education

1. Question: What is cooperative education?

Answer: It is one method of delivering CTE that connects classroom learning to actual work experience. It includes classroom learning based on CTE Program competencies and supervised work-based learning determined by the state-designated Level III Career Preparation program technical competencies.

2. Question: What are the benefits for students completing a cooperative education course?

Answer: There are several benefits for the student:

- Experience the relevancy of academic and technical skills needed on-the-job
- Gain on-the-job knowledge and technical skills
- Receive on-the-job training by a professional/skilled employee
- Complete program-specific occupational competencies
- Earn wages while learning

3. Question: What are the requirements for districts to report enrollment in a cooperative education course?

Answer: Beginning in School Year 2005-2006, students can not be counted and reported for cooperative education enrollment unless they have completed one Carnegie Unit of Level III Career Preparation identified in the CTE Program sequence prior to enrolling in cooperative education.

4. Question: What are the responsibilities of a cooperative education teacher?

Answer: Teachers have the following responsibilities:

- Develop and sign all Training Agreements (see # 5)
- Develop and sign all Training Plans (see # 6)
- Identify, research, contact and develop safe industry sites
- Educate supervisors and mentors related to student learning objectives
- Promote program in cooperation with CTE Program teacher
- Develop interview process to select students
- Assess student needs, progress, competency attainment and satisfaction at work site
- Assess employer needs and satisfaction at work site
- Comply with all labor laws
- Maintain appropriate documentation
- Evaluate students in cooperation with employer
- Collaborate with CTE Program teachers

5. Question: What items are required in the cooperative education Training Agreement?

Answer: Teachers must include the following items in the Training Agreement within 30 days of student employment:

- Name of student, birth date, social security number, address and telephone number
- Name of employer, address and telephone
- Duration of employment

- Responsibilities of workplace mentor, student, teacher coordinator and parent/guardian
- Conditions of employment such as wages, hours, etc.
- Appropriate signatures from employer, student and teacher

6. Question: What records are required in the cooperative education Training Plan?

Answer: Teachers must include the following items in the training plan within 30 days of student employment:

- Beginning in School Year 2005-2006 documentation of prior CTE course (s) taken and Level III Career Preparation competencies attained
- CTE Program competencies identified to be assessed in cooperative education at the work site
- Appropriate signatures from employer, student and teacher

7. Question: What records are required to file in student folder?

Answer: Cooperative education teachers need to have the following on file:

- Training Agreement
- Training Plan
- Application for admittance to Cooperative education class
- District mandated permission slips
- Employer evaluation reports
- Wage and hour report
- Visitation reports

8. Question: What other records may be included in file?

Answer: Records that may be included in the file are:

- Student's job application
- Student's attendance chart
- Student's self evaluations
- Data sheet
- Parent's name, home/business address, phone number(s)
- Teacher-coordinator's name, address, phone number
- Interview information
- Resume (personal data sheet)
- Career interest information/survey
- Reference reports
- Projects or in-class assignments
- Pertinent information relative to work station
- Follow-up report after graduation
- Special questionnaires
- Student conference reports
- Test results
- Transcripts

9. Question: What are the time requirements for the coordinator to supervise a quality cooperative education experience for students?

Answer: There is no law or regulation. Time required depends on many factors such as number of students to be supervised, proximity of work sites to school, etc. The teacher/coordinator needs to have time to:

- Conduct the structured class time at the high school for 225 minutes per week

- Coordinate work-based experience. A two-hour block period is highly recommended since travel to work site is required. Because of liability factors, it protects the teacher and school to have the teacher in the field making sure the training agreements are being followed and the workplace is safe.

10. Question: What equipment is needed for cooperative education teacher?

Answer: The teacher needs equipment and room for private consultation and lockable cabinet to protect private information related to the student and employer.

- Office with desk, chair and locking files
- Telephone, FAX and computer software
- Access to electronic communication (email)
- Classroom with chairs and tables or desks for students
- General classroom teaching resources and equipment

11. Question: Do students have to be paid for their time at work?

Answer: Cooperative education is usually paid employment.

12. Question: What are teacher certification requirements for districts to generate funding for students enrolled in cooperative education?

Answer: Teacher certification requirements for each CTE Program are detailed in The Handbook. Teacher must hold appropriate CTE certification with a Cooperative Education Endorsement.

13. Question: What are the teacher certification requirements for Diversified Cooperative Education (DCE) teachers?

Answer: A DCE teacher must have a VTE/CTE teaching certificate and a Cooperative Education Endorsement. The DCE teacher is responsible for students from several CTE Programs.

14. Question: How can a CTE teacher obtain a Cooperative Education Endorsement?

Answer: The Methods of Teaching Cooperative Education course is available annually from ASU and NAU as well as other universities.

15. Question: Is there a minimum age for participation in cooperative education?

Answer: Following limitations identified in youth labor laws, students need to be 16 years of age or older.

16. Question: What is the minimum number of hours a student may work per week?

Answer: It is highly recommended that students work 15 hours per week.

17. Question: Is independent study or Internet class an optional delivery for the classroom component instruction of cooperative education?

Answer: No. The classroom instruction portion must meet the qualifications for ADM funding as defined in A.R.S. § 15-901. Only a few schools are designated “On-Line Schools.” To qualify for Internet delivery of cooperative education classroom instruction, the school must meet the requirements of the Technology Assisted Project Based Instruction Programs “On-Line Schools.”

18. Question: What calculation is used to fund cooperative education enrollment?

Answer: Funding is limited to the average daily count of students multiplied by the classroom instruction portion of cooperative education, not to exceed 225 minutes per week and 18 weeks per semester. The instruction at the work place does not qualify as classroom instruction.

19. Question: Does cooperative education enrollment count for CTE Program sufficient size requirements?

Answer: Yes. Beginning in School Year 2005-2006, sufficient size will use the class room instruction portion of cooperative education not to exceed 225 minutes per week and 18 weeks per semester for any student who has taken the required Level III Career Preparation course prior to enrolling in cooperative education.

20. Question: What is the web address for the Arizona Work Based Learning Guide and other curriculum resources?

Answer: The Arizona Work-Based Learning Guide is located on the CTE web page at <http://www.ade.az.gov/cte/WhatsNew/>

21. Question: Are there sample resources for cooperative education teachers?

Answer: Yes. They are available on the CTE web page at Arizona Work-Based Learning Resource Guide: <http://www.ade.az.gov/cte/WhatsNew/>

22. Question: Who is available to provide additional information on implementing cooperative education to deliver CTE Program competencies?

Answer: CTE State Program Supervisors will be responsible to review the quality components of cooperative education. They are assigned as follows:

- Agricultural Education, Dennis Fiscus 602-542-5356
- Business Education, Janet Gandy 602-542-5046
- Education Professions, Jan Brite, 602-542-4365
- Family and Consumer Sciences Education, Vacant 602-542-5540
- Health and Community Service Careers Education, Janice Bilan 602-542-3374
- Industrial Technology Education, Joe Epperson 602-542-5423
- Marketing, Media & Information Technology Education, Shea Padilla 602-542-5049

23. Question: Are there professional organizations supporting cooperative education?

Answer: Yes. Membership in Arizona Cooperative Education Association and the program specific affiliate CTE associations is available at <http://www.acteaz.org/>